

## 5 Keys to Acing Your Informational Interview

by Linda Kagan, January 16, 2012

Whether you're a recent grad exploring career paths or you're looking to switch positions in your current field, informational interviews are one of the best tools you have in your job search arsenal. You'll add useful contacts to your network, get valuable information about the companies you're after, and learn more about the path you think you want to pursue.

And, while an informational interview is never the time to ask for a job, it is a way to show interest, talk about your goals, and get face time with people who make hiring decisions—all of which will be key if a position does open up.

So, though it's not a formal interview, you should always consider it as part of the formal interview process—suing up and all. Follow these tips, and you'll ensure you use your informational interview to its fullest potential. Plus, you'll leave a great impression.

### 1. Do Your Research

While the purpose of an informational interview is for you to get more information, you should still do your research on the company and industry before you get there. You certainly don't have to be an expert, but the more you know ahead of time, the more intelligent questions you'll be able to ask, and the more interested and capable you'll look.

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## 5. Follow Up

Thank the person for taking time to meet with you—both verbally and with a thank you note 24 to 48 hours later. And if your interviewer asked you to apply for a job, send in your resume, or provide any other information, do it right away, while you're still fresh in her mind.

And follow-up doesn't end there. Assuming the interview went well, this person is now part of your network. Invite her to connect on LinkedIn, send her an article you think she might find interesting, and—most importantly—let her know once you've landed a position. Even if you don't end up working for her company now, she may be a valuable resource down the line.

### *About The Author*



*Laura Katen is President of Katen Consulting, a women-owned NY-based professional development training company. Katen Consulting facilitates soft skills workshops in the areas of First Impressions + Business Success, Personal Brand + Appearance, Effective Communication, Interactions + Building Rapport, Strategic Dining, Networking Savvy, and Presentation Skills—all geared to help employees, entrepreneurs, job seekers, and students appear polished, professional, and make a positive impression in the workplace. To email or tweet: [www.katenconsulting.com](http://www.katenconsulting.com) or [@katenconsulting](https://twitter.com/katenconsulting).*